

DDI-1330-72

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4 May 1972

MEMORANDUM FOR: Deputy Director for Intelligence
SUBJECT : Conversation with Andrew Marshall

1. At Mr. Marshall's invitation, I called on him in his office on 28 April for a rather rambling discussion that lasted an hour and a half. At the outset, he said he was holding talks with a variety of people in and out of government and wanted to talk with me about the "intelligence community." The one consistent thread in his remarks was a sense of general dissatisfaction with the level of "sophistication" of intelligence production. He recalled that Dr. Kissinger had asked him to do some special jobs in the early months of the Nixon Administration, and that Kissinger at that time had expressed disappointment with the general quality of the intelligence he had seen. Mr. Marshall also said Kissinger had once remarked to him that analyses and commentaries in the newspapers were superior to anything he read in intelligence publications.

2. The only specific area of intelligence production that Mr. Marshall singled out for criticism related to NIEs on Soviet strategic weapons programs. He returned several times to the complaint that these estimates failed to address what he regards as a vital question of the Soviet decision-making process with respect to weapons programs. He did not take advantage of several openings to comment specifically on DDI daily and periodic production, although he observed that some of the papers produced by [] staff contain the kind of in-depth treatment that NSC staff members find useful. At one point, he said that Dr. Kissinger had remarked that current reporting should be more analytical and interpretive, and should strive to be more premonitory. Mr. Marshall said he felt there should be more "speculation" in our reporting. He also believes intelligence is ignoring the more fundamental political and economic forces that shape long-term trends. In response to my comment that NIEs

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try to deal with these considerations, he complained that estimates are too bland and fuzzy to be of much value, and that they tend to ignore or finesse what he felt were essential questions of judgment.

3. Mr. Marshall's point regarding the need for more "speculation" led to the questions of the intelligence community's "conception" of its role and collection priorities. I noted the various inhibitions on "speculation" in finished intelligence and the problems for political analysis presented by a general decline in political reporting by US missions abroad. Mr. Marshall seemed to be indifferent to these problems of sourcing and documentation and implied that the lack of detailed field reporting should not prevent our analysts from venturing their own judgments and speculation. I referred to a general impression abroad in the intelligence community that this administration was interested in "facts, not opinions." Mr. Marshall implied that the community had misunderstood this message and mentioned vaguely that he might take some action to correct this misunderstanding. With regard to collection priorities, he said he felt some reordering was needed, and that the intelligence community had committed too many resources to military intelligence at the expense of political and economic requirements. He indicated that he intended to explore this question in future conversations with intelligence managers.

4. Mr. Marshall discussed the perennial question of "feedback" from consumers without offering any specific ideas beyond recognizing the need for more attention to this problem. He said he felt the community should be kept better informed about policy questions up for decision, but he did not refer to any specific methods or procedures.

5. In conclusion, Mr. Marshall expressed an interest in a further exchange on the question of warning or premonitory intelligence and asked me to return if I developed any further ideas on this subject. He made no specific request for papers or action, and I made no commitments.


Deputy Chief, /Production Staff
for CIB

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Excerpt from MOR, 15 March, by [REDACTED], Subj: Conference
with Andrew Marshall

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"6. Mr. Marshall expressed dissatisfaction with the DDI report on economic intelligence on the grounds he did not consider it responsive to the needs of the NSCIC Working Group. He felt the report confined itself too much to what OER is doing and did not describe what else is underway in other agencies and how well the needs of top level officials are being met. He is arranging for a conference between economic intelligence specialists from CIA, State and Defense and Mr. Hormatz who handles economic matters for Dr. Kissinger's staff."

"7. Mr. Marshall also has arranged a meeting at 0930 hours on 23 March between Hal Sonnenfeldt and Bill Hyland of the NSC Staff and senior intelligence analysts in the Soviet field. Mr. Sonnenfeldt is scheduled to describe his needs for intelligence concerning the USSR."

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